

## KENTUCKY HISTORIC RESOURCES INVENTORY

LW V-8

Historic Name (s) <u>William COTTINGHAM HALBERT Residence.</u>			22. ADD/County <u>Lewis</u>		
Original Owner <u>William COTTINGHAM HALBERT + wife LAVINA</u>			23. Zoning Classification		
Present Name <u>Pugh-Johnson Residence</u>			Magisterial District		
3. Owner's Name			24. U.S.G. S. Quadrant (15'/75')		
4. Owner's Address			25. UTM Reference		
5. Location			Zone Easting Northing		
6. Open to Public			26. Prehistoric Site		
7. Visible from road			Historic Site		
8. Ownership			Building		
9. Local Contact/Organization			27. District		
10. Site Plan with North Arrow			28. Significance Evaluation		
11. Architect			29. Status		
12. Builder			National Landmark		
13. Date			National Register		
14. Style			Landmark Certificate		
15. Original Use			Kentucky Survey		
16. Present Use			Local Landmark		
17. Condition			HABS/HAER		
18. Description			30. Theme		
19. History			Primary		
20. Significance			Secondary		
21. Source of Information			Other		
			31. Endangered		
			32.		
			ATTACH PHOTO		
			Roll No.		
			Picture No.		
			Direction		
			33. Tape No.		
			Negative No.		
			34. Prepared by:		
			35. Organization		
			36. Date		
			37. Revision Dates		
			38. Staff Review		

*Kentucky Heritage Commission*

*104 Bridge Street*

*Frankfort, Kentucky 40601*

*William Cottingham Talbert Residence*  
*Lewis County*















back to Lewis County and placed beside his wife in the old Mower Cemetery.

HALBERT, Judge William C. (taken from "Johnson's History of Kentucky and Kentuckians"), who is the present incumbent of the office of judge of the Circuit Court of the Twentieth Kentucky District, is a lawyer of prominence and influence in Lewis County, Ky. He was born on a farm fourteen miles west of Vanceburg on the 25th of February, 1856, but his parents removing to Vanceburg six weeks after his birth, he has since that time made his home in Vanceburg, and has seen it grow from a hamlet of twelve houses to its present size and importance. In this growth Judge Halbert has taken and contributed an active and generous part, and, like his father, has ever been one of the most public-spirited and important factors in the growth of his native city.

Judge Halbert is a son of William C. Halbert and Lavinia A. Halbert, who were cousins. They were both born and reared in Lewis County, Ky., their parents on each side having been born in Bourbon County, this State, and their parents on each side having come from Culpeper County, Va., in the early settlement of Kentucky, to the central part of the present State of Kentucky. Isaac Halbert, the great-

grandfather of Judge Halbert, was a native of Scotland, born not far from the English border or boundary line, from whence he came to Virginia prior to the Revolutionary War, settling first near Alexandria, in Fairfax County, where he married Elizabeth O'Daniel, and then moved to Culpeper County, in that State, where he continued to reside until he removed to Kentucky, in March, 1785. He served as a private soldier from Culpeper County in a Virginia regiment during the War of the Revolution. In March, 1785, as stated, Isaac Halbert emigrated to Kentucky, moving his family and household goods by land from Culpeper County, up the waters of the Potomac, to Pittsburg, and then, by what was known as a family or houseboat, he made his slow journey to what was then called Limestone, now Maysville, where he landed and took the old buffalo trail or road to Boonesborough station, or fort, where he lived for the next three years, and in which his eldest daughter, Catharine, and perhaps one of his sons, was born in May, 1787. In April, 1785, Isaac Halbert located and surveyed various tracts of land, by virtue of treasury warrants obtained by him from the State of Virginia, aggregating about three thousand acres. These lands were situated in the vicinity of the station, where he then lived, and are now



in Bourbon, Clark, and Jessamine Counties, this State, but then in Fayette County, Va. Daniel Boone, then deputy surveyor of Fayette County, Va., surveyed one of these tracts of land for him, and his survey and plat are now on file in the records of the land office at Frankfort, Ky. He was a friend of Boone and Simon Kenton, and bore his part in the struggle to wrest the new country of his adoption from the Indians and to make it a State. In 1799 he purchased four thousand nine hundred acres of land on Salt Lick Creek, in what is now Lewis County, but was then Mason County, in this State; and in the winter of 1800 he erected a dwelling house on this land, at the forks of Salt Lick Creek, seven miles west of Vanceburg, and in the spring of 1801 he moved into this house, which was the third house built in what is now Lewis County. He continued to reside on this land until his death, in 1825, and he is buried in sight of his home, where he died. He was a member of the first petit jury that was ever impaneled in the Lewis Circuit Court, in July, 1807. His wife was born in Virginia, of Irish stock on both sides, and she survived her husband twenty-two years, dying in 1847, in her eighty-seventh year. Isaac and Elizabeth Halbert became the parents of nine sons and three daughters, all of whom reached maturity,

and six of their sons served as volunteer soldiers in the War of 1812 in various Kentucky regiments; three of them were at the battle of the Thames, and one served as a marine on board of Perry's fleet in the memorable battle of Lake Erie. Stephen Halbert, grandfather of Judge Halbert, was one of these sons who responded promptly to the call of Governor Shelby and marched with him to the Thames and helped to end the war with honor and victory in that section of the Northwest Territory. Another of their sons became a member of the colony that settled in Texas in 1828, and received a league of land on the Brazos River from the Spanish Government for settling on it. He afterward served in the war between Mexico and Texas, and subsequently served as circuit judge in his adopted State.

Stephen Halbert, the paternal grandfather of Judge Halbert, was born in Bourbon County, Ky., in March, 1793, and came, with his parents, to Lewis County in the spring of 1801. He married Mary Cottingham in that county in April, 1813, who died in 1829, at the early age of thirty-two. She was born also in Bourbon County, the daughter of William Cottingham and his wife, Mary Johnson, who emigrated from Snow Hill, Worcester County, Md., and settled in Bourbon County in an early day.



He came from Ireland, or his parents did, and his wife came from England, or was of English descent. To Stephen Halbert and his wife, Mary Cottingham, were born eight children—five boys and three girls—and of this number, William C. Halbert, father of the Judge, was the second in order of birth. He was born in Lewis County on February 20, 1817, and was there reared to maturity on a farm. When barely of age he served as deputy sheriff of St. Francis County, Ark., for three years. Resigning this position on account of ill-health, he returned to Kentucky, and shortly after his return he was appointed acting sheriff of Lewis County (all the county officers being then appointed and not elected), and he continued to discharge the duties of sheriff, and without any deputy, for six years to the entire satisfaction of the court and the people. It is said that he never returned a warrant not executed if the person named in the warrant was in Lewis County; that he never summoned any one to help him arrest a person for whom he had a warrant, and that he never carried a pistol while acting as sheriff; and that he promptly collected and accounted for all public taxes and moneys that came or should have come to his hands as collector.

He read law, and was admitted to the bar in

1856, and then removed from his farm to Vanceburg, where he made his home and engaged in the active practice of his profession until his death, in September, 1877. He was elected and served as county attorney of Lewis County in 1862, and again in 1870, and served eight years in all. He was nominated in 1852 for State senator by the Whig party from the Fleming and Lewis District, but declined the nomination on account of ill-health. In 1865 he was nominated by the Democratic party for State senator from the Mason and Lewis District, and was elected and served four years. He declined a renomination from that party in 1869, on account of ill-health, and the demands of his private business. He was the leader of the Whig party in Lewis County from the time he acted as sheriff of the county until the demise of that party. He then became a member of the Democratic party, and continued the leader of it in Lewis County until his decease. He had a talent and a liking for politics, and could lead and organize his party as but few men could in his day, or since then, in Lewis County. He never drank, used tobacco, or gambled, was a strict member and an elder in his Church, and his one diversion was playing politics; but he never sought office for himself, and when he made a race at all he was drafted to help out



his party and lead a forlorn hope, he having always belonged to the minority party in Lewis County. He was never defeated when he did run for office.

He was a very successful lawyer and enjoyed a wide reputation and large practice in Lewis County, where he was on one side of every important case tried in that county for years prior to his death. He procured the passage of the law that secured the removal of the county seat from Clarksburg to Vanceburg, and to his efforts almost alone does Vanceburg now enjoy the honor of being the county seat. He was the father of the turnpike road system and the bridge law of Lewis County, under which more than one hundred miles of turnpike were built and many bridges erected over all the main streams in the county. He gave the site for the court-house and jail to the county. He also gave the site for the Christian Church, of which he was an elder, in Vanceburg. He was a charter member of Polar Star Lodge, No. 363, F. & A. M., and of Burns Chapter, No. 74, of Vanceburg. He built the flouring mill in Vanceburg and many of the dwelling houses therein, and took an active and intelligent interest in building up the town, of which at one time he owned practically half the land in it.

Judge William C. Halbert was the fifth in

order of birth in a family of nine children, and he was six weeks old at the time his parents settled in Vanceburg, in April, 1856. He attended the public schools of Vanceburg, and for two years attended the National Normal School, at Lebanon, O. When seventeen years of age he began reading law under his father, and in May, 1874, when slightly over eighteen years of age, was admitted to the bar. In the fall of 1874 he returned to school at Lebanon, O., and remained there until June, 1875, when he returned home and began the active practice of his profession as a partner of his father, with whom he continued to practice until the death of his father, in September, 1877. For three terms he served as city attorney of Vanceburg, and in August, 1890, was elected county attorney of Lewis County; was re-elected in November, 1894, and again in November, 1897, serving until January, 1901. In November, 1905, he was elected to the Legislature and served two years as a member from Lewis County. He was a member of the committees on judiciary, criminal law, and amendments to the Constitution while in the Legislature, and took an active part in the deliberations of that body while one of its members. He declined to accept a re-nomination for the Legislature on account of the demands of his law business. In



November, 1909, he was nominated and elected without opposition as circuit judge of the Twentieth Judicial District for a term of six years, and is now discharging the duties of that office. In June, 1910, he was commissioned by the governor as special judge for the State-at-large, under an Act of the Legislature passed in March, 1910, and held by the Court of Appeals as constitutional.

In politics Judge Halbert is a Republican, of which party he has been one of the most active and faithful of its workers in Lewis County, and on the stump and at the polls has fought its battles earnestly and with great zeal, fidelity, and ability; but on the bench he has endeavored to forget politics and mete out the law to all regardless of politics. He has so far succeeded in this effort that he decided against the candidates of his party in election contests involving the offices of county judge and sheriff in Boyd County, in which much feeling was involved. His decisions in these cases were subsequently approved by the Court of Appeals. It can be truthfully said of Judge Halbert that he is well-equipped both by nature and legal training for the position he now holds, and that he has given very general satisfaction both in his own district and as special judge when called to act outside of his district. He is strictly fair, courteous to and patient with the humblest member

of the bar, and has untiring industry and energy to clear up the dockets and congested litigation in his district.

Judge Halbert is a member of the Masonic order, holding membership in Polar Star Lodge, No. 363, F. & A. M.; Burns Chapter, No. 74, Royal Arch Masons; and Maysville Commandery, No. 10, Knights Templar. He is also a member of the Junior Order United American Mechanics of Vanceburg.

In April, 1887, Judge Halbert was united in marriage to Miss Fannie Bate, who was born in Newport, Campbell County, Ky., and who was a daughter of Samuel Bate, a successful wholesale merchant in Cincinnati during and prior to the Civil War. He was born in Cheshire County, England, in 1818, and emigrated to this country in 1839, settling in Cincinnati, where he married a descendant of one of the first settlers of that city, and for whom one of the streets there is now named. To this union five children were born, of whom four are now living, whose names are: William C., Jr., John Bate, Harlan R., and Frances A., the eldest being twenty and the youngest nine. Judge Halbert and his wife are members of the Christian Church in Vanceburg, to which his grandparents adhered under the preaching of Alexander Campbell, the founder of that Church."